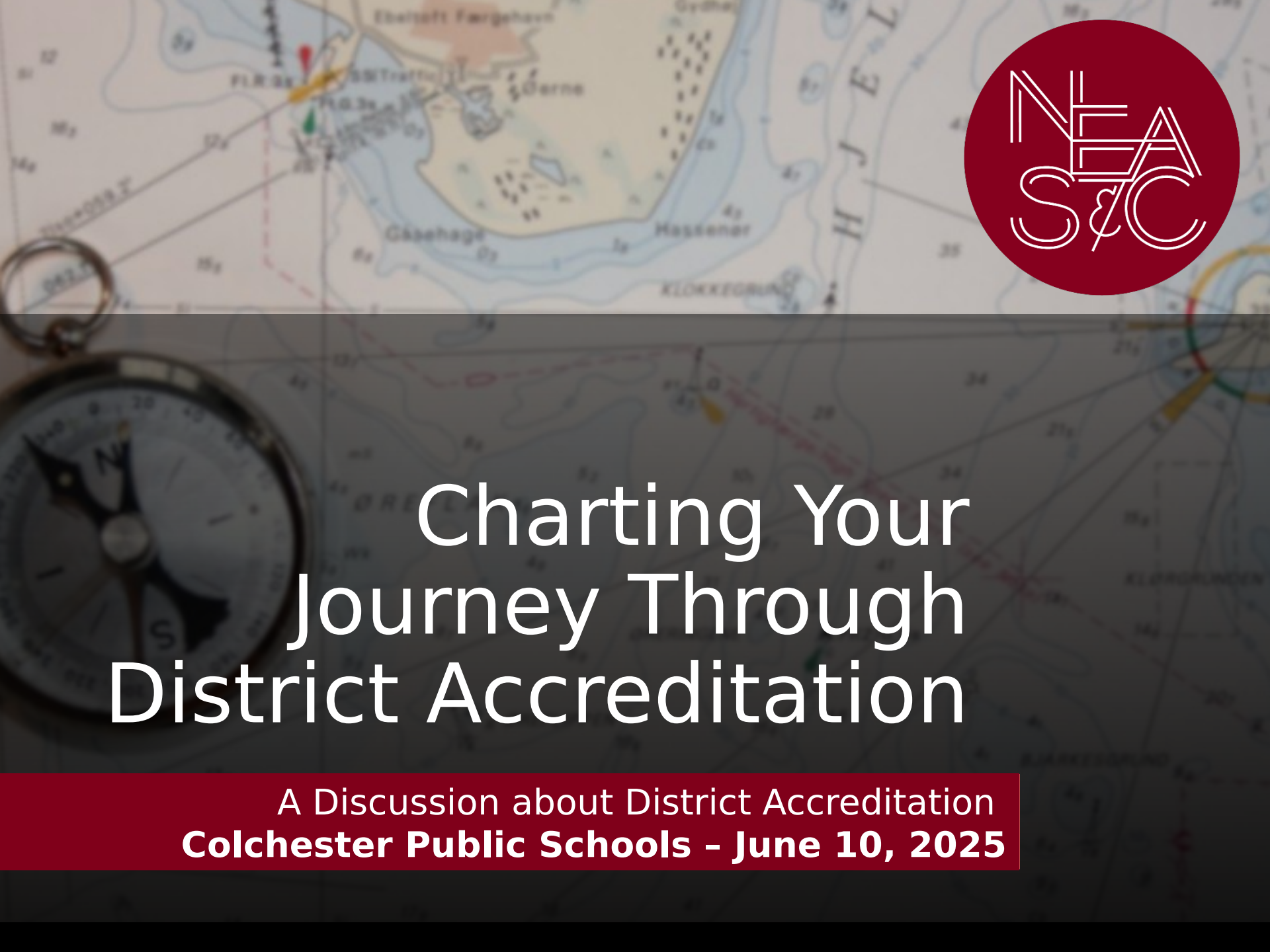

Charting Your Journey Through District Accreditation

A Discussion about District Accreditation

Colchester Public Schools – June 10, 2025

Objectives for the Session

- An Overview of NEASC
- The 2023 Standards
- The Accreditation Process
- The Visit Protocol
- District Accreditation
- Questions and Answers

New England Association of Schools and Colleges

- Oldest regional accreditor in the United States
- Accredits over 1,700 public, independent, and international schools and institutions across New England and around the world

Commission on Public Schools (CPS)

One unified Commission, one set of Standards

for New England's public schools, including:

- Elementary schools
- Middle schools
- High schools
- CTE centers and programs
- Districts

New!

Commission on Public Schools

has 35 elected volunteer members representing the six New England states

comprises:
- 24 administrators (*including superintendents*)
- 6 faculty members
- 5 educational partners

accredits 700 elementary, middle, high, and career and technical/vocational schools

served by more than 1,200 volunteers each year

CPS Professional Staff

Alyson Geary
Director

Carl Johnson
Associate Director

Fran Kennedy
Associate Director

Kathy Montagano
Associate Director

Bruce Sievers

NEW ENGLAND ASSOCIATION OF SCHOOLS AND COLLEGES

NEASC Commission on Public Schools

The Vision for Learning Accreditation Process

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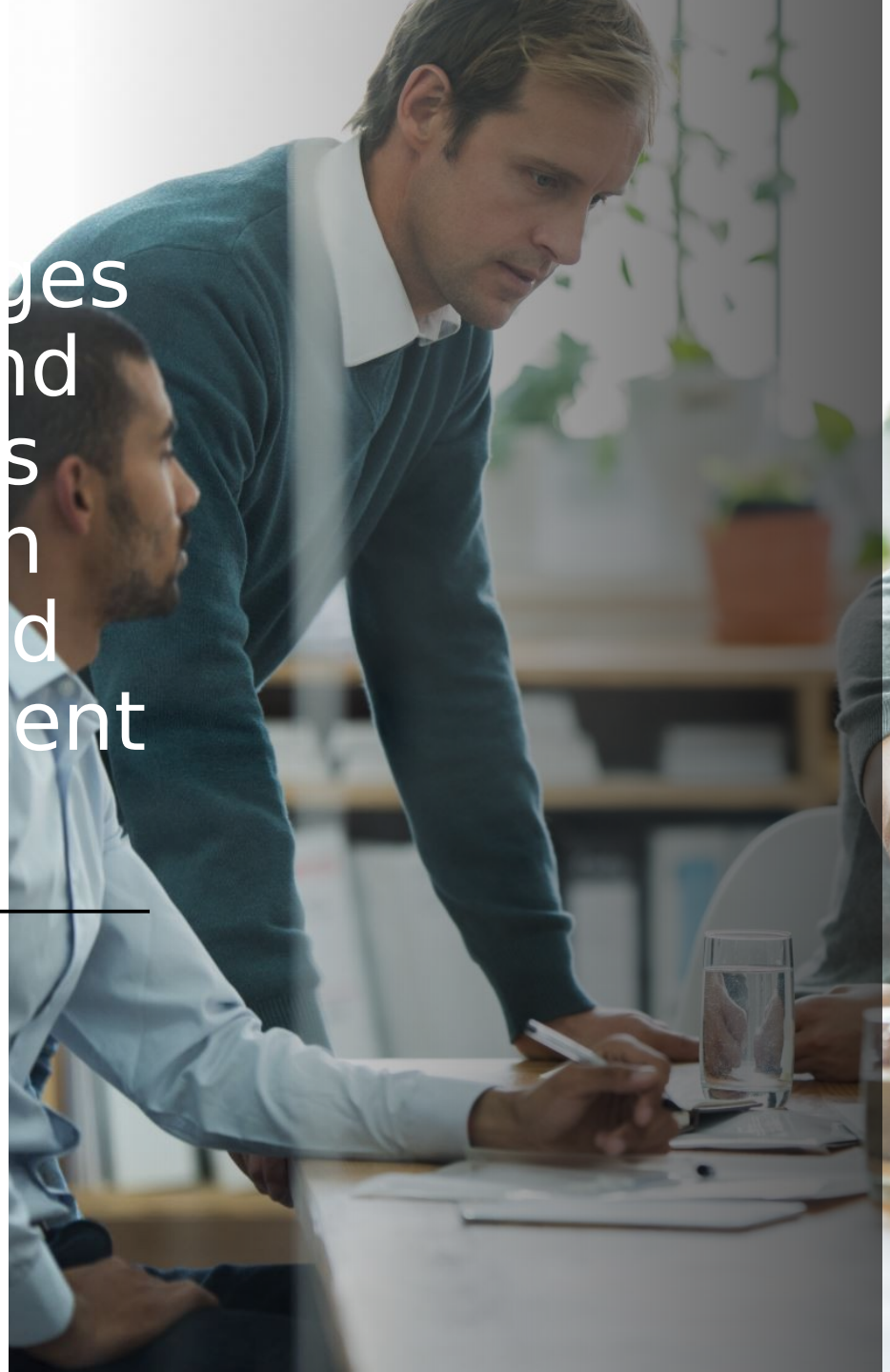
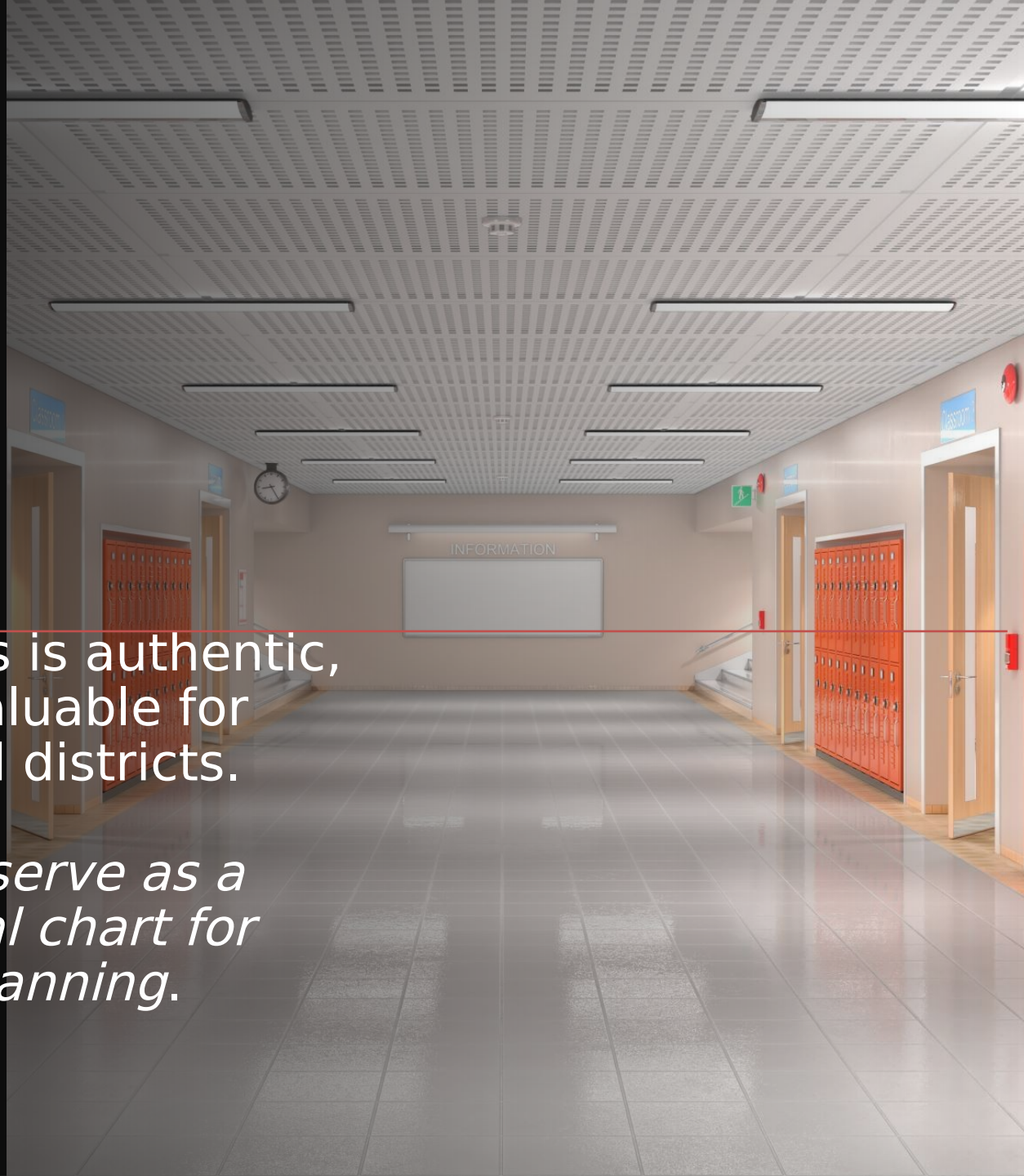


Schools or districts identify their own Priority Areas for Growth.



The process is authentic, real, and valuable for schools and districts.

It can also serve as a navigational chart for strategic planning.

NEW ENGLAND ASSOCIATION OF SCHOOLS AND COLLEGES

NEASC Commission on Public Schools

2023 Standards for Accreditation

2023 Standards for Accreditation

For the full Standards, go to

2023 Standards for Accreditation

1- **LEARNING CULTURE:**

- safe environment for learning
- ensures equity
- fosters shared values through vision of the graduate

2 - **STUDENT LEARNING:**

- defined curricular experience
- students can demonstrate skills and knowledge in a variety of ways

3 - **PROFESSIONAL PRACTICES:**

- school growth/improvement plan
- organizational practices and professional learning
- community relationships to support student learning

4 - **LEARNING SUPPORT:**

- coordinated interventions for all students
- robust support services to assist each student in meeting the vision of the graduate

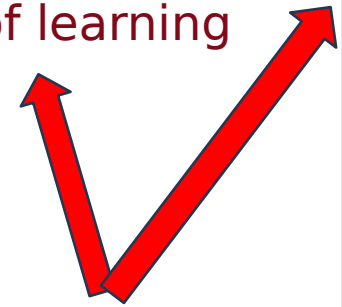
5 - **LEARNING RESOURCES:**

- time, funding, and facilities to support the vision of the graduate
- infrastructure supports the delivery of high-quality curriculum, programs, and services

For the full Standards, go to

32 Principles of Effective Practice

PRINCIPLES of Effective Practice	DESCRIPTORS of Effective Practice
1.2 The school's core values, beliefs about learning, and vision of the graduate drive student learning, professional practices, learning supports, and the provision and allocation of learning resources.	**The school community:** • develops, implements, and regularly reviews the written document describing its core values, beliefs about learning, and vision of the graduate that includes the attainment of transferable skills, knowledge, understandings, and dispositions necessary for future success • ensures the school's core values, beliefs about learning, and vision of the graduate are known and understood by all stakeholders • ensures the core values, beliefs about learning, and vision of the graduate are actively reflected in the school culture and guide the school's policies, procedures, decisions, and resource commitments to diversity, equity, inclusion, and



exampl

8 Foundational Elements

☑ essential building blocks ☑ must align with each ☑ of them if not aligned, prioritize

Socially-emotionally safe environment

Core values, beliefs, vision of the graduate

Curriculum - consistent format, all courses

School growth/improvement plan

Advisory committee + review process for CTE

Intervention strategies to support learners

Site/plant supports curriculum, programs, services

physically safe environment

Foundational Elements (8)

Standard 1- Learning Culture

PRINCIPLES of Effective Practice	DESCRIPTORS of Effective Practice
FOUNDATIONAL ELEMENT 1.2a The school has a written document describing its core values, beliefs about learning, and vision of the graduate that includes the attainment of transferable skills, knowledge, understandings, and dispositions necessary for future success.	The school community: • uses a dynamic, collaborative, and inclusive process informed by current research to develop its core values, beliefs about learning, and vision of the graduate • creates a vision of a graduate that includes the attainment of transferable skills, knowledge, understandings, and dispositions necessary for future success

Key Themes within the 2023 Standards:

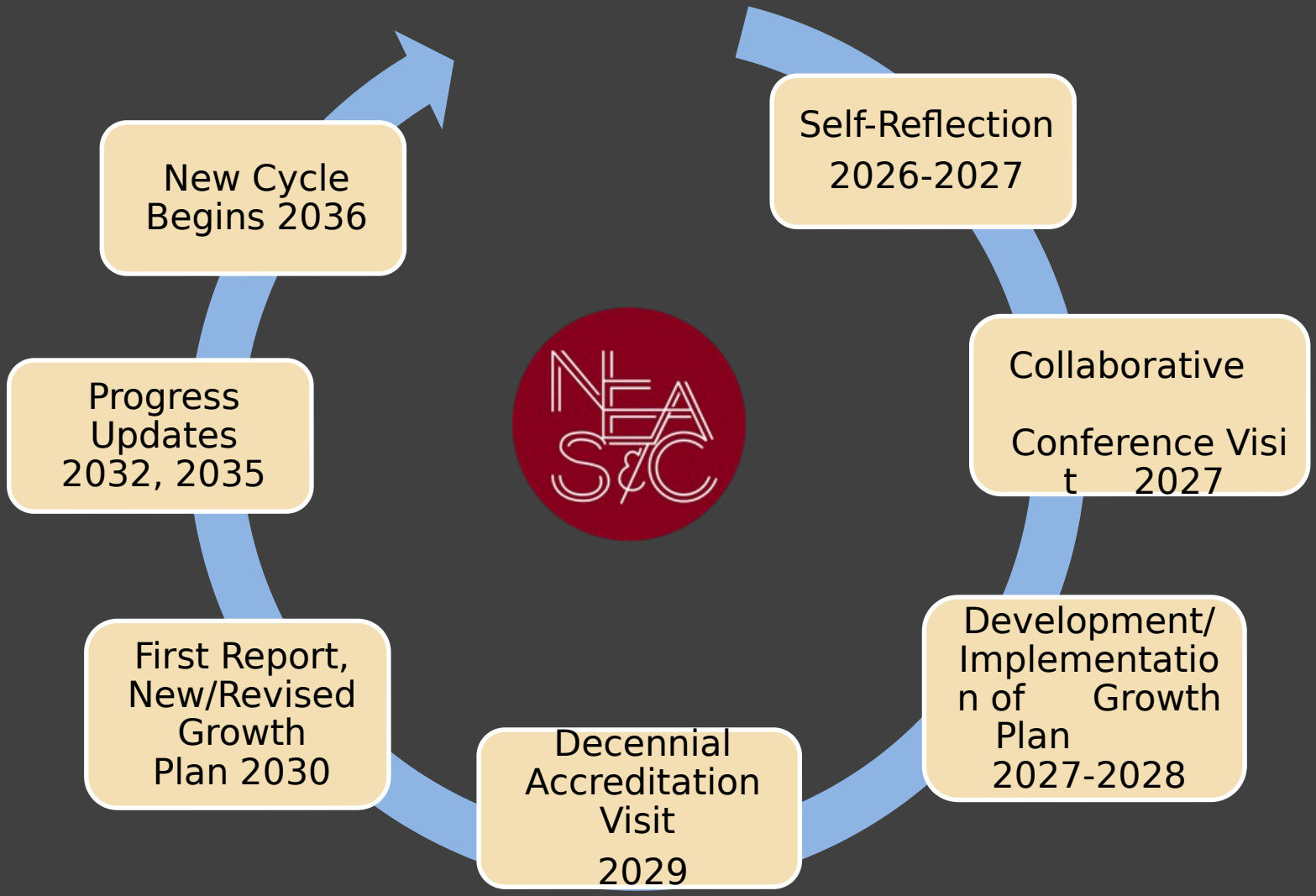
- **Vision of the graduate**
- **Culture of student learning**
- **Developing a growth mindset**
- **Student health and**

NEW ENGLAND ASSOCIATION OF SCHOOLS AND COLLEGES

NEASC Commission on Public Schools

2023 Vision for Learning Protocol

Ten-Year Cycle for 2029 Protocol
(Adopting Bacon Academy's Timeline)



The superintendent completes the Candidate Accreditation Application.

NEW ENGLAND ASSOCIATION OF SCHOOLS AND COLLEGES

Commission on Public Schools Candidate for Accreditation Application - District

Welcome!

Welcome to the **Commission on Public Schools Candidate for Accreditation Application**.

You may stop and save your progress at any time by clicking "Save and continue later" in the top right corner (visible after this page).

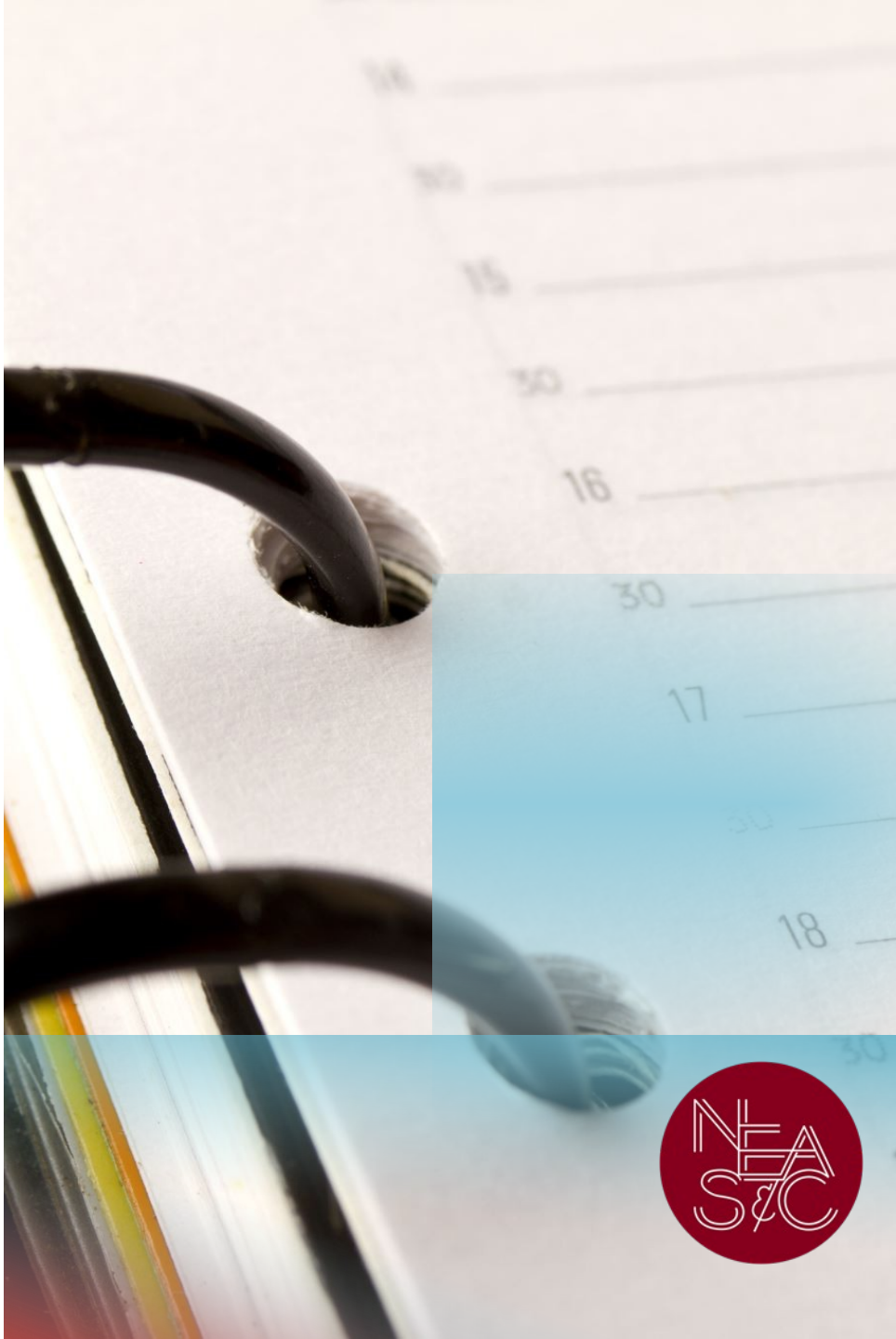
Click "Next" to get started.

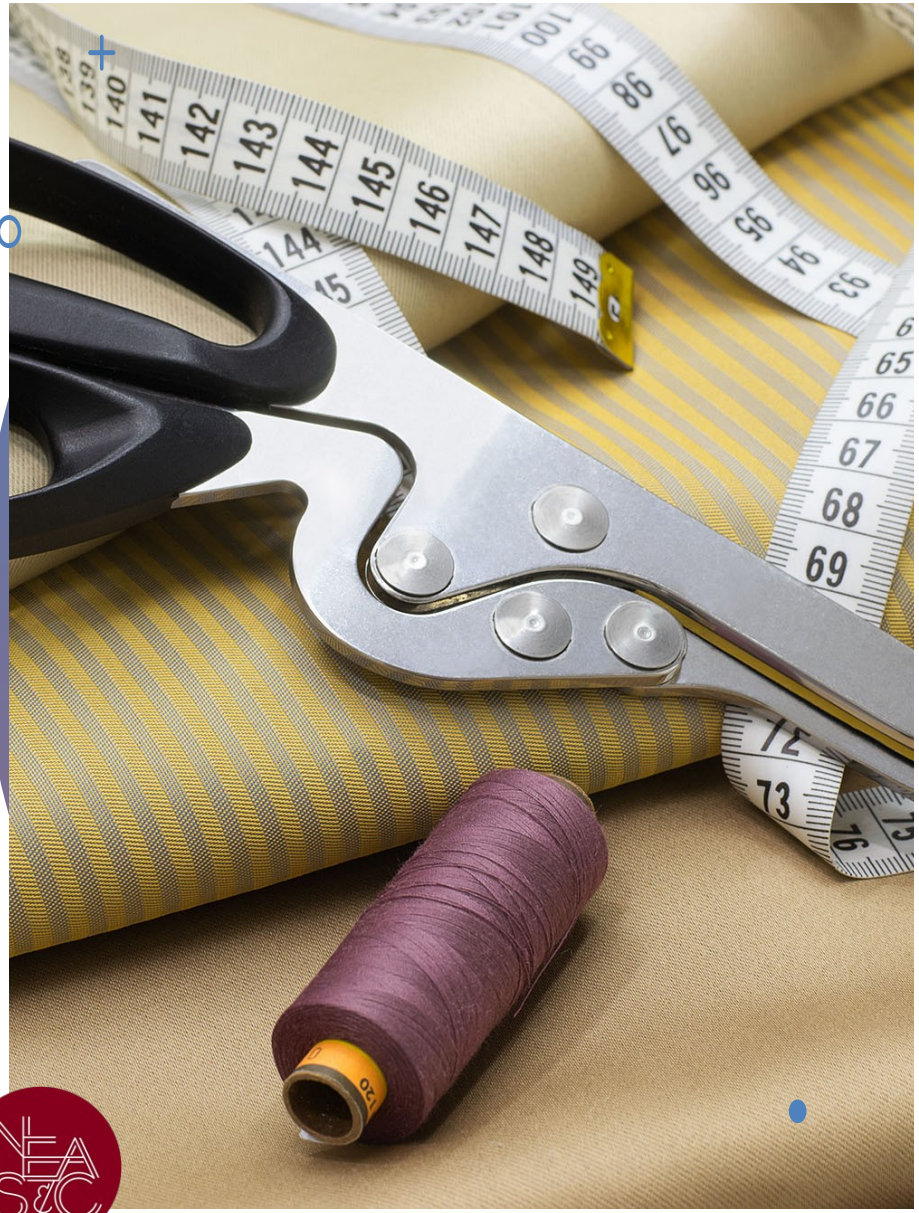
Next

No Guesswork…

Every step of the way, there is help from:

- your **NEASC liaison**
- three **seminars** –
  - ❑ Accreditation
  - ❑ Decennial Visit
  - ❑ Follow-Up
- **neasc.org**/resources-public-schools
- **myriad NEASC conferences**, workshops, and professional learning opportunities
- fkennedy@neasc.org





A Bespoke Process…

The District Accreditation **protocol can be tailored for each step**, including how you:

- exercise “poetic license” in the process to fit your unique needs and district culture
- organize your professional staff for the Self-Reflection process
- tie-in and overlap existing and anticipated initiatives

Collaborative Conference Visit
(two years before the Decennial Accreditation Visit)

The Collaborative Conference Visit focuses on:

- reviewing the district Self-Reflection Report
- district's schools' Current Conditions
- alignment with the Foundational Elements
- reviewing CTE programs (if applicable)
- validating the Priority Areas for Growth

Collaborative Conference Visit

- Districts identify viable dates for a single 2-day visit.
- Teams consist of 8-10 volunteer colleagues who help districts and their schools.
- Activities include school tours, classroom visits, and meetings with various stakeholders.

Decennial Accreditation Visit
(two years after the Collaborative Conference Visit)

The Decennial Accreditation Visit focuses on:

- reviewing the District Summary Report
- alignment with the Foundational Elements
- progress on the Priority Areas for Growth
  - validating Next Steps
- observing teaching and learning

Decennial Accreditation Visit Details

Visits are on-site on Monday, Tuesday, and Wednesday.

Superintendents are asked to identify viable dates.

Teams have 8-10 colleagues volunteering to help districts.

Districts can determine visit activities and foci.

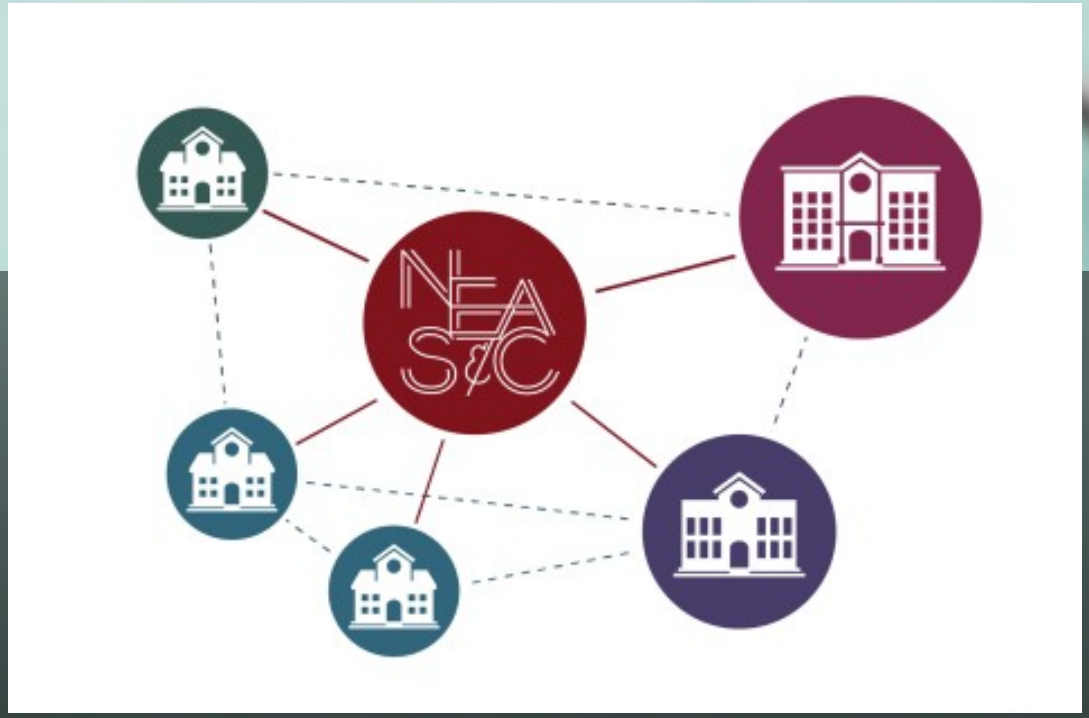
District & Schools' Growth/Improvement Plans

The purpose is to outline a vision for continuous improvement.

The plan includes:

- Priority Areas for Growth
- district and school initiatives

The plan may be integrated into existing district and school improvement plans and strategic planning.



District Accreditation

Why *District* Accreditation?

Indicates that a district:

- **aligns its practices** with the Standards
- **has completed a community-wide,** multi-school self-assessment **process**
- hosted visiting teams of peers **who reviewed the common goals across individual schools and central office**

Why *District* Accreditation (*continued*)?

Ensures a collaborative, community approach to accreditation

Encourages K-12 district cohesiveness, strategic planning, and curriculum

Supports district initiatives and priorities

Assures families and external institutions that all district schools provide high-quality learning experiences and services

Other Advantages?

Planning is personalized for each school district

1 Self-Reflection

- 1 Collaborative Conference
- 1 Decennial Visit

Saves time and expense

Let’s talk about money…

- Initially, there is a **$1,000 Candidate Application fee**.
- **No dues are requested** until the Commission accepts the district as a Candidate (after a Candidacy Visit).
- NEASC **no longer charges districts separate dues** for each school (*to lower the cost*).
- Instead, for districts with high schools*, dues stem from the enrollment-based amount that would be collected for the high school, using the **group-discounted formula** on the next slide…

Let's talk about money… continued…

- EXAMPLE: If the high school dues would normally be $4,515, and the district has a middle, an intermediate, and an elementary school, it would be $1,030 per additional school. The total district dues would be $7,605
- Previously, this district would have needed to tender $10,395 with the high school at $4,5155 and the three other schools at $1,960 each.
- Therefore, the new group-discounted price saves the example district $2,790 annually.
- Because there would not be a separate set of visits for each school, visit expenses are

The Latest Districts Seeking Accreditation

Currently expanding throughout CT, MA, ME, NH, and VT in step with the new 2023 Standards and protocol

Connecticut

North Stonington

New Milford

Brookfield

Massachusetts

Fairhaven ★

TECCA

Manchester-Essex

Maine

Falmouth ★

York ★

New Hampshire

Sanborn Regional ★

Windham K-8 ★

Vermont

Addison Central (IB using ACES protocol: *Unique!*)

West River

★ = now an accredited district

District Accreditation - Public Schools in the US

Overview +
Elementary, Middle, and High Schools +
Technical and Career Schools/Centers +
District Accreditation –
for Public Schools in the US

District Accreditation through the NEASC Commission on Public Schools indicates that a school district has worked to align its practices with the Standards for Accreditation. Accredited districts have completed a multi-school, community-wide self-assessment process, and have hosted a visiting team of peers who review the individual schools and the district office in terms of common goals and the Standards for Accreditation. The award of District Accreditation signifies that the schools in the district have met the Standards for Accreditation at an acceptable level and are committed to maintain those Standards. Continued Accreditation is dependent upon the schools and the district demonstrating ongoing, reflective progress to improve teaching and learning and the support of teaching and learning within their schools throughout the K-12 continuum.

The Standards

District Accreditation is possible because only one set of standards, the 2020 Standards, are now used for all three levels of public schools accredited by NEASC: elementary, middle, and high schools. Previously, a school system would have used two different sets of standards and scheduled a separate review visit for each school.

The Process

Districts pursuing accreditation will use the "Vision for Learning" framework. To accommodate the different sizes of districts and varying number of schools within them, the planning is personalized for each school district to facilitate a streamlined process. Regardless of size, the schools in a district work together on a single Self-Reflection, with a committee drawn from each school and the central office. In addition, only one collaborative conference and a combined decennial visit for all the schools in a district are required, making the district approach a much more viable option for many school systems.

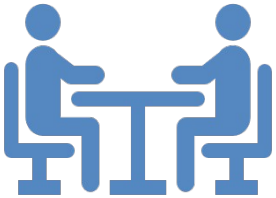
Benefits to the District

- Reinforces that all district schools assess themselves and set goals using a common language and Standards
- Examines the ways schools in the district support each other
- Encourages a K-12 approach
- Promotes district cohesion
- Supports vertical articulation of curriculum K-12
- Reinforces district initiatives and priorities
- Reduces the time and the cost a district invests in Accreditation

Could be right for you…

neasc.org/district-accreditation

Contact your CPS liaison for tailored planning



Your liaison is happy to:

- meet with you, your central office staff, and your principals
- present to your leadership team, faculty, and board
- provide materials
- facilitate training

neasc.org/resources-schools-public

Resources for schools - A Vision for Learning

for schools hosting Visiting Teams in the year 2020 and beyond

Besides the materials presented on our website, each school that is preparing for NEASC Accreditation is assigned a professional staff liaison who can assist school officials at any point during the accreditation process. In addition, the Commission on Public Schools has recently begun to work with other professional organizations in order to provide ongoing professional development for its member schools and sponsors a number of programs and events for schools at various points during the accreditation cycle.

For the link, go to

Accreditation Process +

School Self-Reflection Training with Staff Liaison +

Self-Reflection +

Collaborative Conference Visit +

Thank you for your time and attention!

Contact: Fran Kennedy

Email: fkennedy@neasc.org